



*Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515*

*Anna G. Eshoo
Sixteenth District
California*

March 30, 2023

The Honorable Tom Cole,
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Quigley,
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation,
Housing and Urban Development, and
Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Quigley,

As you begin your critical work on the Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, I request that you include \$2,500,000 for the Assyrian Arts Institute's Assyrian Cultural Center. This request for Community Project Funding is associated with the Department of Housing and Urban Development Economic Development Initiatives account.

The requested funding will allow the Assyrian Arts Institute, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, to plan and design an Assyrian Cultural Center which would be the only Assyrian cultural community center in California. The Center's primary purpose will be to provide programming in areas including (but not limited to) education, history, language, the arts, culture, after-school programming, programming for elders, support for recent immigrants, and professional development to all members of the community.

The Center will educate second-generation Assyrians about their history and traditions and will share Assyrian culture and heritage with non-Assyrians. This project will particularly benefit second-generation and recent Assyrian refugees; immigrants in need of English language and professional skills to help them acclimate to their new home; and youth who are living between two cultures. It will also support the broader Assyrian and non-Assyrian community in need of education on the Assyrian people's history, culture, and language which is the oldest continuously spoken language in the world but is at risk of becoming endangered. The Center will benefit all who are interested in preserving and learning about a culture and language nearly 7,000 years old, as well as providing a common space for collaborative programs with various other professional, educational, and cultural groups.

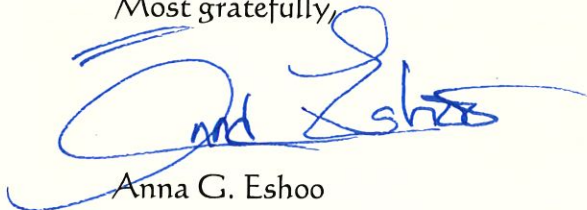
nearly 7,000 years old, as well as providing a common space for collaborative programs with various other professional, educational, and cultural groups.

As an indication of community support, I've enclosed 14 letters of support from the following local elected officials and community leaders:

- Assemblymember Gail Pellerin, California State Assembly
- Supervisor Otto Lee, County of Santa Clara
- Vice Mayor Teresa Keng, City of Fremont
- Tony Koshaba, President, Assyrian Democrats of the Bay Area
- Margaret Petros, Executive Director, Mothers Against Murders
- Howard Matis, President, Contemporary Physics Education Project
- Romena Jonas, President, Assyrians for Education
- Gloria Maceiko, CEO and Founder, Silicon Valley Advantage
- Maryam Shamalta, Founder and President, Shamiram Media
- Neil Chamaki, President and Founder, Assyrian Advisors
- Bill James, Chair, Santa Clara County Democratic Party
- Milan Balinton, Executive Director, African American Community Service Agency
- Dorene Kastelman, President, Jewish Democratic Club of Silicon Valley
- Nels Frye, President, Naby Frye Assyrian Fund for Culture

If enacted, this request would help preserve the culture of the Assyrian people and support second-generation and recent Assyrian refugees, and it's why I wholeheartedly support this Community Project Funding request and ask that you do so as well.

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo

Enclosures